

Surah Al-Qamar

(The Moon)

This Surah is Makki. It contains 55 verses and 3 sections

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 8

افْتَرَيْتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَ الْقَمَرُ ﴿١﴾ وَإِنْ يَرَوْا أَيَّةً يُعِرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا
 سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَمِرٌ ﴿٢﴾ وَكَذَبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقِرٌ ﴿٣﴾
 وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِّنَ الْأَنْبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ﴿٤﴾ حُكْمَةٌ بِالْغَةِ فَمَا تُغْنِ
 النُّذُرُ ﴿٥﴾ فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلَى شَيْءٍ نُّكَرٍ ﴿٦﴾ خُشُّعاً
 أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَانُوهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّتَشَّرِّضٌ ﴿٧﴾
 مُهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ يَقُولُ الْكُفَّارُونَ هَذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾

The Hour (of doom) has drawn near, and the moon has been split asunder. [1] And when these people see a sign, they turn away and say, "(This is) a transient magic." [2] And they have rejected (the Truth) and followed their desires, while every matter has to be settled (at some time). [3] And there has come to them as much news (of the earlier communities) as contains enough to warn, [4] a perfect wisdom, but the warnings are of no avail (to them). [5] Therefore, turn aside (O Prophet,) from them. (They will see the reality) on the Day when the caller will call to a terrible thing. [6] With their eyes humbled, they will come out of the graves like locusts spread all over, [7] rushing quickly towards the caller. (On that Day) the disbelievers will say, "This is a

difficult day." [8]

Linkage between Sūrah An-Najm and Sūrah Al-Qamar

Whereas the preceding Sūrah An-Najm had ended on a note of warning to disbelievers in the words: أَزْفَةُ الْأَرْضِ azifat-il-azifah, i.e., the Hour of their doom has drawn near, the present Sūrah opens with a similar sentence, "The Hour (of doom) has drawn near" and this statement is followed by one of its proofs, that is, the appearance of the miracle of the moon being split asunder. There are many signs of the Day of Doom; one of them is the advent of the last of the Prophets Sayyidnā Muhammad ﷺ itself, as reported in a *hadīth* 'I was sent like this with the last Hour' and he pointed with his middle and index fingers. There are many other Traditions mentioning that the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is close to the Day of doom. Likewise, a great sign of Doomsday is the miracle of the Prophet ﷺ when he split the moon into two pieces, then he rejoined them. Also, the miracle of 'moon-splitting' is significant from another point of view: Just as Allah's power split the moon into two, so will planets and stars be destroyed by Him by breaking them into very small pieces which is not impossible, as has been proved by the miracle of splitting the moon.

The Phenomenon of Moon-Splitting : A Miracle

The disbelievers of Makkah asked the Messenger of Allah to produce a proof in support of his claim, and he, with the dispensation of Allah, split the moon into two parts. This miracle is verified by the concluding part of verse 1: 'and the moon has been split asunder.'. The incident has been narrated successively in Traditions of reliable authority, and reported by such learned Companions as 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd, 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Umar, Jubair Ibn Mu'tim, 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abbās, Anas Ibn Mālik ﷺ and others. 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ reports that he himself was present and witnessed when the Messenger of Allah performed this miracle. Imāms Tāhawī and Ibn Kathir رحمهما الله تعالى have stated that the reports narrating the phenomenon of 'moon-splitting' are *mutawātir* (i.e. it has been reported successively and uninterruptedly by such a large number of authorities that their concurrence on falsehood is inconceivable.) Therefore, this Prophetic miracle has been proved by incontrovertible evidence.

It was mentioned earlier that a large number of Traditions report the

incident of 'moon-splitting', which may be summarized as follows: Whilst the Messenger of Allah was sitting at Minā in Makkah, the pagans demanded that the Messenger of Allah should produce a proof substantiating his claim. Allah split the moon in two parts. A part of the moon was over one mountain on the eastern side, and another part was over another mountain on the western side. Thus there was a mountain between the two parts. This incident took place on a moonlit night. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to all who were present: 'Be witnesses'. When all the people saw the miracle clearly, the two pieces rejoined. It was not possible for any person with eyes to deny this clear miracle. However, the pagans said: 'Muhammad has ensorcelled us, but he cannot bewitch the whole world; so let us wait for people to come from the neighboring parts of the country and hear what they have to say'. (Baihaqī and Abū Dāwūd Tayālisi) Tayālisi records on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ that when travelers from the neighboring parts of the country arrived, they confirmed that they did see the moon in two parts. Some reports indicate that the miracle of 'moon-splitting' occurred twice, but more authentic reports confirm that the miracle occurred once only. (Bayān-ul-Qurān) The following Traditions are worth noting, which have been taken from Ibn Kathir:

(1) Sayyidnā Anas Ibn Mālik ﷺ narrates, as recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī:

إِنَّ أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ سَأَلُوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يُرِيهِمْ إِذَا فَارَاهُمُ الْقَمَرَ شِقَيْنِ حَتَّىٰ رَأُوا حِرَاءَ بَيْنَهُمَا . (بخاري و مسلم)

'The people of Makkah asked the Messenger of Allah to show them a sign, and he split the moon into two parts until they saw the mount of Hira' between them'.

(2) Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ narrates, as recorded in Ṣaḥīḥs of Bukhārī and Muslim, and in Musnad of Ahmad,

إِنْشَقَ الْقَمَرُ عَلَىٰ عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شِقَيْنِ حَتَّىٰ نَظَرُوا إِلَيْهِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اشْهُدُوْا .

"The moon was split in two parts during the time of Allah's Messenger, and they saw its two parts. Allah's Messenger said: 'Be witnesses'."

Ibn Jarīr has cited this report with the following addition:

كُنَّا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَعْنِي فَانْشَقَ الْقَمَرُ فَاخَذَتْ فِرْقَةً خَلْفَ الْجَبَلِ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اشْهُدُو اشْهُدُوا .

"Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ says: 'We were with Allah's Messenger at Minā. Suddenly the moon split in two pieces, and one piece went away behind the mountain. Allah's Messenger said: "Be witnesses; be witnesses.'" "

(3) The narration of Sayyidnā 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ūd ﷺ is recorded by Baihaqī and Abū Dāwūd Tayālī in the following words:

إِنْشَقَ الْقَمَرُ بِمَكَّةَ حَتَّى صَارَ فِرْقَتَيْنِ فَقَالَ كُفَّارُ قُرْيَشٍ أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ هَذَا سِحْرٌ سَحْرُكُمْ بِهِ إِبْنُ أَبِي كَبْشَةَ أَنْظُرُوا السُّفَارَ فَإِنْ كَانُوا رَأَوْا مَا رَأَيْتُمْ فَقَدْ صَدَقَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا لَمْ يَرُوا مِثْلَ مَا رَأَيْتُمْ فَهُوَ سِحْرٌ سَحْرُكُمْ بِهِ فَسُئَلَ السُّفَارُ قَالَ وَقَدِيمُوا مِنْ كُلِّ جَهَةٍ فَقَالُوا رَأَيْنَا. (ابن كثير)

"In Makkah, the moon was split into two parts. The disbelieving Quraish claimed: 'This is sorcery. Ibn Abī Kabshah [the Prophet] has ensorcelled you. Therefore, wait for the neighboring travelers to arrive. If they too have seen the two pieces of the moon, so he has spoken the truth. But if they have not seen the parts of the moon, then this is indeed a magical illusion which he has performed on you.' When the travelers arrived and were asked about it, they all confirmed that they did see the two parts of the moon." : (Ibn Kathir)

Criticism against the Miracle of 'Moon-Splitting'

The critics have raised two types of criticism against the miracle: one is based on the assumptions of Greek philosophers, and the other is based on layman's thinking.

The deviant Greek philosophers assume that it is not possible for the heaven and other celestial bodies to split or crack, and rejoin. But this is merely an idea unsubstantiated by any solid or concrete proof. Whatever proof or evidence the philosophers have advanced is flimsy, shaky, inadequate and unsubstantial. The Islamic philosophers [*mutakallimīn*] have broken down their arguments and have shown that they are baseless, false and absurd. They could not prove by any rational argument that 'moon-splitting' is impossible. Indeed, illiterate people regard every unusual thing as impossible. Obviously, the very meaning of

mu'jizah or a prophetic miracle is that it is an unusual event that is abnormal and out of general habit, which cannot be performed by common people. Any ordinary work which can be performed at any time cannot be called *mu'jizah* or miracle.

The other criticism based on a layman's thinking is that if such a wonderful event had taken place, its knowledge would have been commonplace and would have found its mention in the books of history, but they say that they have found no such thing recorded.

Such a thinking is too simplistic which lacks careful analysis. A careful analysis shows that the event had occurred in Makkah at night. At that particular moment, in many parts of the world it must have been day time where and when the question of witnessing this event does not even arise. In many other countries, it must have been middle of the night, or last part of the night when the people normally sleep. Furthermore, people who are awake also do not stare at the moon all the time. Splitting of the moon would not make any difference on the moonlight spread on the earth, so that it would attract people's attention. The event took place suddenly and lasted for a short while. It is a daily experience that in particular countries at different times lunar eclipse takes place. Nowadays a forecast is made about its occurrence well in advance, yet there are hundreds of thousands of people who are absolutely unaware of it. Can this be the proof that the lunar eclipse did not take place? Thus if the event is not recorded in world history books, its occurrence cannot be denied or refuted.

Besides, the event is recorded in the famous and reliable history book of India called 'Tarikh-e-Farishtah'. It has been mentioned in this book that the Mahārājah, a native ruler, of Malabār had witnessed this phenomenon that night with his own eyes, and had it entered in his diary. This incident was the cause of his embracing Islam. Earlier on the narratives of Abū Dāwūd Ṭayalī and Baihaqī were quoted about the pagans of Makkah themselves who inquired from the people arriving from the neighboring parts of the country and they confirmed and verified that they had seen it. Allah, the Pure and the Exalted, knows best!

(وَلَنْ يَرُونَ أَيَّةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُّسْتَنَدٌ) (And when these people see a sign, they

turn away and say, "[This is] a transient magic.... 54:2). The word *mustamirr*, in the popular sense of the word, as used in Persian and Urdu, means something lasting or enduring. However, in the Arabic language it is sometimes used in the sense of passing away or coming to an end, being derived from *marra* and *istamarra*. Leading authorities on *Tafsīr*, like *Mujāhid* and *Qatādah* رحمهما اللہ تعالیٰ, have applied this sense of the word in the present context. Thus the verse means that the Quraish alleged that the sign of moon-splitting they saw was an illusion and false; its effect will soon diminish and fade away. Another meaning of the word *mustamirr* is strong and firm. *Abūl-Āliyah* and *Dāhhāk* interpret the word in this sense, meaning that this is a very potent sorcery.

وَكُلُّ امْرٍ مُّسْتَقْرٌ (...while every matter has to be settled....54:3). The literal meaning of the word *istigrār* is to settle. The verse means that everything must ultimately reach its end and the matter must become clear. If a veil is fabricated and cast over the truth or reality, eventually [in its designated time] the false veil will be removed and the truth and falsehood will be clearly distinguished.

مُهْرِجُينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ (rushing quickly towards the caller....54:8). The word *muhtī'īn* literally denotes walking quickly with one's head raised above. This, together with the two preceding verses, gives a graphic picture of the Day of Gathering or Reckoning. The people will hasten hurriedly in the direction of the voice of the Caller towards the *māshar* (area of Reckoning). The words: "With their eyes humbled," in preceding verse (7) are in no conflict with the present verse, because there will be many different occasions in *māshar*. On some of these occasions, the eyes of all the people will be cast down.

Verses 9 - 17

كَذَّبُتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمٌ نُوحٌ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَأَزْدَجْرٌ ﴿٩﴾
 فَدَعَ رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَعْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصَرٌ ﴿١٠﴾ فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا إِ
 مْنَهُمْ ﴿١١﴾ وَفَجَرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَّقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِّرَ
 وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَى ذَاتِ الْوَاحِدَةِ وَدُسِّرٌ ﴿١٢﴾ تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنَنَا جَزَاءً

لِمَنْ كَانَ كُفَّارٌ ﴿١٤﴾ وَلَقَدْ تَرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِنْ مُذَكَّرٍ ﴿١٥﴾
 فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِيْ وَنَذَرِ ﴿١٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلَّذِكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ
 مُذَكَّرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

The people of Nūh denied (the truth) before them. So they rejected Our slave, and said, "(He is) a madman", and he was (also) threatened (by them). [9] So he prayed to his Lord saying, "I am overpowered, so defend (me)." [10] So We opened the gates of the sky with water pouring forth profusely, [11] and We caused the earth to gush forth as springs; so the water (of both kinds) met together for a destined event. [12] And We caused him (Nūh) to board that (ship) which had planks and nails, [13] which sailed under Our Eyes, as a reward for the one who was rejected (by the infidels). [14] And We left it (the ship) as a sign. So, is there one to take lesson? [15] How then was My torment and My warnings? [16] And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice? [17]

The Story of the People of Nūh ﷺ and the Lesson Learnt from it

مَحْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرٌ (and said, "(He is) a madman", and he was threatened... 54:9). The word *wazdujira* literally denotes 'he was rebuked'. It refers to the attitude of the people of Nūh ﷺ who rebuked and threatened him to stop him from preaching. On another occasion in the Qur'an, we read that the people of Nūh ﷺ threatened and warned him that if he does not stop propagating his message, he would be stoned to death.

'Abd Ibn Ḥumāid reports from Mujaħid that when some of his people found him somewhere, they would choke him, as a result he would become unconscious. But when he recovered, he would pray to Allah, 'O Allah! Forgive my people, for they do not know the truth'. In this way, he endured the persecution of his people patiently for nine hundred and fifty years, prayed for their forgiveness and understanding of the truth. Eventually, when the situation became intolerable, and he could no longer resist his people, he invoked Allah to help him against them. As a result, Allah opened the gates of the heaven with torrential rain, and the entire nation was drowned which is mentioned in the forthcoming verse.

فَالْتَّقِيَ المَاءُ عَلَى أَمْرٍ قَدْ قَبِرَ (so the water [of both kinds] met together for a

destined event....54:12). In other words, the rain water pouring down from the skies in torrents and also bubbling water gushing forth from under the ground, caused the Deluge [a huge flood] which engulfed the entire land, and thus the Divine decree was fulfilled, destroying the people of Nūḥ ﷺ to the last man, and even the peaks of the mountains could not give them any shelter.

(ذَاتُ الْوَاحِدَةِ وَدُسُرٍ) (to board that [ship] which had planks and nails...54:13). The word *alwāh* is the plural of *lawh* and it refers to a board or a plank. The word *dusur* is the plural of *disar* and it stands for nail. It also means a cord of fibres of the palm tree with which the planks of a ship are bound together.

(وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلَّذِكْرِ فَهُلْ مِنْ مُّذَكَّرٍ) (And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice?....54:17). The word *dhikr* in the prepositional phrase '*lidh-dhikr*' has several shades of meaning: to remember or memorize or by-heart; and to take heed of admonition and warnings. Both these meanings are equally applicable here. Allah has made it easy to memorize the Holy Qur'an. The followers of the previous scriptures were not privileged to memorize their entire book, word by word - whether *Torāh*, *Injil* or *Zabūr*. It is one of the privileges conferred on Muslims that He has made it easy, even for the tender-aged children, to commit the entire Qur'an to memory, word for word, without missing out a single letter. The Qur'an is preserved in the hearts of hundreds of thousands of Huffaẓ for the past fourteen hundred years in every age, people and their children of every level, in every region or territory of the world.

The verse could also mean that Allah has made the Qur'an so simple that just as an intellectual and knowledgeable person benefits from its contents, so does a layman, having no expertise in relevant sciences. He too can benefit from its admonition and warnings (at his own level).

Qur'an is Made Simple to Memorize and to Take Heed; Not for Ijtihād or Istinbāt

In this verse the verb يَسِّرْ *yassarnā* [We have made easy] is qualified by the prepositional phrase لِذَكْرٍ *lidh-dhikri* [for seeking advice]. This implies that the Qur'an has been made easy to the extent of memorizing it and paying heed to its advice and warnings, from which all can benefit -

whether a learned scholar or an unlearned person, whether young or old. This does not necessarily imply that derivation or deduction of laws and injunctions from the Qur'ān is easy for everybody. *Ijtihād* or *Istinbāt* (deduction) of injunctions from the Qur'ān is a science, having its own complex rules. Scholars well-grounded in knowledge have spent years of their life to attain to the position where they could exercise *Ijtihād* and *Istinbāt*. It is not a field where every ordinary person or layman can play his role.

This indicates the error of some of the deviant people who, on the strength of this statement, wish to pose as *mujtahid* and derive laws and injunctions with their own reasoning, without acquiring complete and profound knowledge of the Qur'ān, and without fully grasping its methodological principles and rules. This is clear deviation!

Verses 18 - 42

كَذَّبُتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِيُّ وَنَذْرٍ ﴿١٨﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا
صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمٍ نَحْسٍ مُسْتَمِرٍ ﴿١٩﴾ تَنْزَعُ النَّاسَ لَا كَانُوكُمْ أَعْجَازٌ
نَحْلٌ مُنْقَعِرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِيُّ وَنَذْرٍ ﴿٢١﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا
الْقُرْآنَ لِلَّذِكْرِ فَهُلْ مِنْ مُذَكَّرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾ كَذَّبُتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنَّذْرِ ﴿٢٣﴾
فَقَالُوا أَبْشِرْأَ مِنَّا وَاحِدًا نَتَبِعُهُ لَا إِنَّا إِذَا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعْرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ الْقِيَ
الْذِكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَابٌ أَشِرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ سَيَعْلَمُونَ عَدًّا مِنْ
الْكَذَابِ الْأَشِرِ ﴿٢٦﴾ إِنَّا مُرْسِلُوا النَّاقَةَ فِتْنَةً لَهُمْ فَارْتَقِبُهُمْ وَاصْطَبِرْ
﴿٢٧﴾ وَنَيْتُهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَاءَ قِسْمَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ حَكُلٌ شَرْبٌ مُحْتَضَرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾
فَنَادُوا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَى فَعَقَرَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِيُّ وَنَذْرٍ
﴿٣٠﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَكَانُوا كَهْشِيمُ الْمُحْتَضِرِ
﴿٣١﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلَّذِكْرِ فَهُلْ مِنْ مُذَكَّرٍ ﴿٣٢﴾ كَذَّبُتْ قَوْمٌ
لُوطٍ بِالنَّذْرِ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّا لُوطٌ نَجَّيْنَاهُمْ

بِسْحَرٍ ﴿٤٤﴾ نَعْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا طَكَذِيلَكَ نَجْزِيُّ مَنْ شَكَرَ ﴿٤٥﴾ وَلَقَدْ
أَنْذَرَهُمْ بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٤٦﴾ وَلَقَدْ رَأَوْدُوهُ عَنْ ضَيْفِهِ
فَطَمَسْنَا أَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِيُّ وَنُذُرِ ﴿٤٧﴾ وَلَقَدْ صَبَحَهُمْ بُكْرَةً
عَذَابٌ مُسْتَقِرٌ ﴿٤٨﴾ فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِيُّ وَنُذُرِ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَلَقَدْ يَسَرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ
لِلِّذِكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَّكِرٍ ﴿٤٠﴾ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَ إِلَيْكُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ النُّذُرُ ﴿٤١﴾
كَذَّبُوا بِآيَتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخْذَنَاهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُفْتَدِرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

(The people of) ‘Ad rejected (their prophet). How then was My torment and My warnings? [18] We did send to them a furious wind in a day of lasting bad luck, [19] plucking people away, as if they were trunks of uprooted palm-trees. [20] How then was My torment and My warnings? [21] And indeed We have made the Qur’ān easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice? [22] (The people of) Thamūd rejected the warners. [23] So they said, "Shall we follow a single human being from among us? Then we will be in error and insanity. [24] Is it that the advice has been cast upon him alone out of all of us? No, but he is a bragging liar." [25] Tomorrow they will know who is the bragging liar! [26] We are going to send the She-camel as a trial for them; so watch them (O Ṣalīḥ,) and keep patience, [27] and tell them that water (of the well) is to be shared between them (and the She-camel), so as the right of having water shall be attended by each (alternatively). [28] Then they called their man (to kill the She-camel,) so he undertook (the task) and killed (the She-camel). [29] How then was My torment and My warnings? [30] We sent upon them a single Cry, and they were like crushed leafs of a hedge-builder. [31] And indeed We have made the Qur’ān easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice? [32] The people of Lūt rejected the warners. [33] We sent upon them a rain of stones, except the family of Lut whom We saved in the last hours of night, [34] as a grace from Us. This is how We reward the one who offers gratitude. [35] And he (Lut) had certainly warned them of Our grasp, but they disputed the warnings. [36] And they had even tried to tempt him against his guests (so that they may snatch them away for bad purpose,) but We blinded their eyes: "Now taste

My torment and My warnings!" [37] And on the next morning, a lasting torment overtook them: [38] "Now taste My torment and My warnings." [39] And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice? [40] And the warners came to the family of Fir'aun (Pharaoh). [41] (But) they rejected all Our signs; so We seized them – a seizure by a Mighty, a Powerful Being. [42]

Lexicological Analysis

The word سُرْ su'ur has appeared twice in this Sūrah. First it has appeared in verse 24 in connection with the people of Thamud where it is their own word, and means 'madness or insanity'. The second time, the word appears in connection with the punishment of the sinners where it is the word of Allah in the forthcoming verse [47] فِي حَلَلٍ وَسُرْ Here the word su'ur may also be taken in the sense of Hell-Fire. According to lexicologists, the word su'ur is used in both these senses.

(وَأَدْوَةٌ عَنْ ضَيْفِهِ) (And they had even tried to tempt him against his guests...54:37). The word murawadah signifies to entice someone to satisfy one's lust. This verse refers to the night when the angels came to Prophet Lüt ﷺ in the shape of handsome young men, as a test from Allah for his people who were addicted to homosexuality. Prophet Lüt ﷺ hosted his guests. The licentious people came to him from every direction, and the Prophet Lüt ﷺ had to shut the door to protect his guests. They came during the night and tried to break the door down and scale the walls to come in. The immoral behaviour of his people distressed Prophet Lüt ﷺ but when the guests revealed to him that they were angels and have been sent by Allah to inflict destructive punishment on his people, he felt comforted; they assured him that they will not be able to hurt them in any way.

Sūrah Al-Qamar started on the note that Doomsday is fast approaching, so that the infidels and pagans, who have lust and greed for this world and are unaware of the Hereafter, come to their senses. First, the punishment of the Hereafter is mentioned. Then the evil consequences of their misdeeds in the present life are cited. Reference is made to the conditions of world-famous nations, their opposition to their respective prophets and its evil consequences. The people of Nuh ﷺ were the first people who were destroyed by Divine punishment. Many different kinds of devastating torments were inflicted on the people of Nuh, the tribes of 'Ad, Thamud and Lüt ﷺ and the people of Fir'aun in

this world. Their stories and histories are recounted in detail on several occasions in the Qur'ān. Here they have been condensed.

All these five nations were the strongest and resourceful. It was not possible for any of the subdued nations to overcome any of these superpowers. The current set of verses show how the superpowers were destroyed by Divine punishment. After describing the punishment of each nation, the Qur'ān repeats the following statement as a refrain: تَكَيْفَ كَانَ (How then was My torment and My warnings?). That is, when the Divine chastisement overtook these nations who were very powerful in terms of might, wealth and number were killed like flies and mosquitoes. In addition, the following verse is repeated to advise the Muslims and the infidels in general: وَلَئِنْ يَسَرَّنَا الْقُرْآنُ لِلَّذِكْرِ فَهُلْ مِنْ مُذَكَّرٍ (And indeed We have made the Qur'ān easy for seeking advice. So, is there one to seek advice?) This is to indicate that the only way to avoid the terrible chastisement is to take to the advice of the Qur'ān. Allah has made the Qur'ān easy to the extent of paying heed to the admonition and warnings. Only the most ill-fated person will not take advantage of the warnings.

The forthcoming verses address the people of the time of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ that they are not more powerful in terms of wealth, number and might than the people of Prophet Nūh عليه السلام, the tribes of 'Ad and Thamūū, Prophet Lut's عليه السلام people and the people of Fir'aun. Then how are they sitting in a careless manner?

Verses 43 - 55

أَكْفَارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أُولَئِكُمْ أَمْ لَكُمْ بِرَاءَةٌ فِي الزُّبُرِ ﴿٤٣﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ
نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُنْتَصِرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾ سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوْلَوْنَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿٤٥﴾ بَلِ
السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَى وَأَمْرٌ ﴿٤٦﴾ إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي
ضَلَالٍ وَسُعْرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ يَوْمَ يُسَحَّبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا
مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٨﴾ إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدْرٍ ﴿٤٩﴾ وَمَا أَمْرَنَا إِلَّا
وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٌ بِالْبَصَرِ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا أَشْيَاعَكُمْ فَهُلْ مِنْ
مُذَكَّرٍ ﴿٥١﴾ وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعْلَوْهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ ﴿٥٢﴾ وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ

مُسْتَطْرٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّتٍ وَّنَهَرٍ ﴿٥٤﴾ فِي مَقْعِدٍ صِدْقٍ
عِنْدَ مَلِيلٍكَ مُقْتَلِرٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

(Now) are the disbelievers among you in a better position than all of them (the aforesaid punished people), or do you have immunity (recorded) in the sacred books? [43] Or do they say, "We are a large group, well-defended."? [44] Soon shall this 'large group' be defeated, and all will turn their backs. [45] Rather the Hour (of judgment) is their appointed time (for their full recompense), and the Hour is more calamitous and more bitter. [46] Surely the guilty ones are in error and madness. [47] On the Day when they will be dragged into the Fire on their faces, (it will be said to them,) "Taste the touch of Hell." [48] Verily, We have created every thing according to (Our) predestination. [49] And (implementation of) Our command is no more than a single act like the twinkling of an eye. [50] And We have destroyed people like you; so, is there one to take lesson? [51] And every thing they have done is recorded in the books (of deeds). [52] And every thing, small and big, is written down. [53] Of course, the God-fearing will be in gardens and rivers, [54] in a seat of Truth, near to the Omnipotent Sovereign. [55]

Lexicological analysis

The word زُبُرٌ *zubūr* (in verse 43) is the plural of *zabūr*, which stands for any written book. It specifically refers to the Scripture that was revealed to Prophet Dāwūd عليه السلام.

أَذْهَى وَأَمْرٌ (...more calamitous and more bitter...54:46). The word *adħā* means more or most calamitous. The word *amarr* is derived from *murr* which originally means 'bitter'. By extension anything 'difficult' or 'painful' is also referred to as *amarr* and *murr*. In the phrase فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعْرٍ *fi dalālin wa su'ur*, *dalāl*, as is known, means 'error' or 'deviation' and the word *su'ur* in the present context means the 'Hell-Fire'.¹ In the phrase *ashyā'akum*, (verse 51) *ashyā'* is the plural of *shi'ah*, and it means a 'follower', that is, those who follow their pattern of life.

(1). This is according to one interpretation. The other meaning of the word is 'madness' and the translation in the text is based on this meaning. (Muhammad Taqi Usmani)

In the phrase مَقْعِدٌ صِدْقٌ *maq'ad-i-sidqin*, the word *maq'ad* means 'seat' and the word *sidq* means 'truth' and implies the 'seat of truth' where there will be no idle and obscene talks.

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا بِقَدْرٍ (Verily, We have created every thing according to [Our] predestination...54:49). In the prepositional phrase *bi-qadar*, the word *qadar* literally denotes to 'measure' and to create something with a proper measure and proportion. It is possible for this literal sense of the word to apply in the current verse: Allah is the Supreme Sage Who created every species of the existent entity wisely with proper measurement - whether big or small, and in different shapes and sizes. Having created, He maintains the structure of every individual in a very wise measurement: The fingers and toes are not equal in size; the lengths are different; the length and breadth of hands and legs are wisely structured; and their bones, muscles and skins are created flexible to stretch and contract. When we analyze every single part of every single limb and organ of [human] body, we discern the wondrous vistas of Divine wisdom opening up.

As a theological term, *qadar* is used in the sense of *taqdīr* [Divine predetermination, predestination, preordainment, preordering or decree]. Most authorities on *Tafsīr*, on account of some versions of *hadīth*, take the word *qadar* here in this sense. It is recorded in *Musnad* of Ahmād, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim and Tirmidhī on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah ﷺ that once the pagans of Quraish came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ debating and arguing with him on the question of *taqdīr* (Predestination). On that occasion this verse was revealed. In the light of this tradition, the verse purports to say that Allah has predetermined the total sum of everything. He created everything with predestined limits before they were created. He knew everything that will occur before it occurred, and recorded everything [time and place, growth and decline] that will occur, before they occurred. Everything that occurs in this world, occurs according to the Divine Plan worked out in Pre-Eternity or Eternity-without-Beginning.

The question of *taqdīr*, according to *Ahl-us-sunnah wal-jamā'ah*, is one of the affirmed and standard articles of faith in Islam. Anyone who denies it outright is an atheist or goes out of the pale Islam, and the sects that deny it by convoluted or twisted interpretation are *fāsiqīn* [sinners or

transgressors]. Imām Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and Ṭabarānī record a Tradition on the authority of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ that the Holy Messenger ﷺ said: "Some members of every community are Magians, and the Magians of my Ummah are those who deny *taqdir*. If they fall ill, do not visit them; and if they die, do not attend their funerals." (Rūh al-Ma‘āni.) Allah, the Pure and Exalted, knows best!

Alḥamdu lillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Qamar
Ends here